

SIAMBR FASNACH A THWRISTIATH BRO FFESTINIOG

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM

MINUTES 19th OCTOBER 2015 HELD AT THE DENIRO'S CAFÉ , BLAENAU FFESTINIOG

Present: Clare Britton – Rheilffordd Ffestiniog ac Eryri (Cadeirydd/Chairman); Diane Lea (Ysgrifenyddes/Secretary) – Plas Blaenddol; Alister Haveron – Dolawel Guest House; Kevin Baldwin – De Niro's Café; Meirion Ellis – Cambrian News; Chris Fosbury – Eifion Stores; Iris Fosbury – Eifion Stores; John Whitehead – Bryn Eltyd Eco Guest House; Ceilia Whitehead – Bryn Eltyd Eco Guest House; Jon March – Jon March Photographics; Gail Jordan – Harlequin Jewellery; Dennis Jones – Harlequin Jewellery; Jodie Catlin – Trawsfynydd Holiday Village; Rhiannon Jones – Brethyn Blaenau; Miles Moulding – Go Below; Richard Hope – Isallt.

Guests: Christine Rhisiart – Business Development Adviser, Coleg Meirion Dwyfor; Adam Coward – Worldpay.

1.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
	Apologies for absence were received from: Gaile Weir – Bridge Café; Steve Cunliffe – Pengwern Arms; Helen Hardy - Elen's Castle; Owain Williams - Natwest; Rhian Williams – Teithiau Cerdded/Blaenau Active; Megan Thorman – Antur Stiniog; Mandy Williams-Davies – Gwynedd Councillor.
2.	COLEG MEIRION DWYFOR SUPPORT TO BUSINESSES
2.1	Clare welcomed Christine Rhisiart to the meeting. Christine talked about the support that the College can give to local businesses. The department is now call Busnes@LlandrilloMenai and provides a wide range of support services for all the training and development needs of employers such as short, intensive training; apprenticeships and work-based learning, part-time, professional and work-related courses; and, specialist services for innovation, product development and expert advice. Although no grant funding is currently available, Christine did invite people to ring her from time to time to see if any grants were available.
2.2	Christine especially talked about the “World Host™ Customer Service Training” programme from people1st which focuses on hospitality skills in the retail and tourism sectors. A town will receive destination status if 25% or more of the local businesses are recognised as World Hosts™. The benefits are immediate to customers and the World Host™ logo can be used on businesses own marketing materials and, when destination status is achieved, it can be used on the Chamber of Commerce and Tourism website. No town in Wales has yet achieved Destination Status and Christine encouraged members to participate. A course would need at least 8 businesses to enable it to be run in Blaenau at a cost of £60.00 per person for a day's training. Otherwise courses are available at the college sites for the same fee. Any apprentice under 25 years of age working within a local business could receive training free of charge giving them experience and a qualification. Christine can also advertise your apprenticeship opportunities. In response to a question from Jodie, Christine agreed to check for the Chamber what was classed as a 'business' in relation to the World Host™ programme. N.B. Since the meeting Christine has sent the following information: This is the response from People 1st regarding the question on which 'business' should be applying for the World Host: <i>To gain WorldHost Destination Status we ask that 25% of hospitality, retail and passenger transport businesses have trained 50% of their frontline staff.</i> Further information about the recognition can be found on following website link: http://www.worldhost.uk.com/become_destination
2.3	If you want to discuss any type of training for yourselves or your staff then please contact Christine direct. 08454 505960 (English) or 08445 460460 (Cymraeg), busnes@gllm.ac.uk and www.gllm.ac.uk/busnes Clare thanked Christine for her presentation.
3.	WORLDPAY
3.1	Clare welcomed Adam Coward from Worldpay to the meeting. Adam explained how Worldpay deals with all card payments and all sizes of businesses. They have 2 products: Product 1 has a one-off charge of £40.00 for a pin reader and works through a mobile telephone with a charge of 2.75% on each transaction. The benefit of this is that it can be used outdoors and it can use either wi-fi or 3g

	<p>access. It can be used for mail order and telephone orders and can also be used via a web browser. Product 2 has a terminal card reader at a monthly fee of £15 to £20 plus a percentage charge on debit and credit cards. Contactless payments have the same charges. It was noted that using the Cashback facility by giving cash back to the customer had no charge/fee and could lower bank charges for paying in cash.</p>
3.2	<p>A discussion took place about PCI DSS compliance which had to be adhered to. Worldpay make an annual charge of £25.00 for this compliance check each year. It is a way for businesses to check that they are adhering to the laws regarding use and storage of personal card details.</p>
3.3	<p>Chris Fosbury raised the issue that 5 charges appeared to be applied to each card transaction: an authorisation charge, PCI DSS compliance charge, money into the business bank account charge, the payment charge/% and the monthly fee. Adam said that authorisation was via Freephone so did not incur a charge and he suggested that businesses check to see if there is an Autofree facility at their banks to try and avoid that particular charge which was an issue with banks and so outside of the control of Worldpay.</p>
3.4	<p>Adam also said that Pay By Link was a way of doing a secure transaction. Clare thanked Adam very much for his presentation and the information that he was able to provide. It was suggested that businesses should contact Adam direct for a more detailed look into what would be best for their own business as there was such diversity in the meeting.</p>
4.	MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING
	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7th September 2015 were approved.</p>
5.	MATTERS ARISING
5.1	CIST Grant Application (3.2)
	<p>Clare stated that work was ongoing to bid for funding from other sources.</p>
5.2	DHFfest (3.3)
	<p>It was noted that visitors had commented that there was no cash available in the cash machines over the weekend. The Town Council had written to HSBC about this.</p>
5.3	World Heritage Site Application (3.4)
	<p>It was noted that this was ongoing.</p>
5.4	Car Parking in Blaenau Ffestiniog (3.5)
	<p>Mandy Williams-Davies had informed the Chairman that signage would soon be installed to clarify the status of the car park behind Ty Gorsaf.</p>
5.5	Siop Jeff (5.1)
	<p>It was noted that this item was ongoing. It was mentioned that a new shop was due to open in the town and a variety of charities would benefit from the sales of the shop.</p>
5.6	Go Below (5.3)
	<p>Miles reported on the trial usage of part of the Ffestiniog Railway's car park at Tan y Grisiau. They are using old station buildings so customers do not need to go to the base in Betws-y-Coed first. It was also a great benefit that the Lakeside Café was next door. Miles was in the process of updating the accommodation section of the website and welcomed requests from all local accommodation providers to be added to their site.</p>
5.7	Bryn Ellyd and National Ecohomes (5.5)
	<p>John Whitehead reported that some interest had been generated by this open day at Bryn Ellyd.</p>
5.8	National Biking Event 19th September 2015 (5.6)
	<p>Gail Jordan had attended this event to promote the town of Blaenau Ffestiniog with the visitors to the event. It was noted that some people had not booked to stay locally because the national event was advertised as "Antur Stiniog" and not as an event held at Blaenau Ffestiniog so they thought the name of the town was Antur Stiniog. Visitors appreciated the maps that Gail handed out.</p> <p>Gail also stated that she was attending 5 events with her jewellery stall and would be very pleased to have other business leaflets on her stall for people to pick up. Contact Gail if you would like her to do this with your leaflets.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u></p>

5.9	Celebration of the Life of Bob Cole (5.7)
	Clare reported that over 60-people attended this gathering and that it raised funds for Dignity in Dying.
6	TREASURER'S REPORT
	Iris Fosbury reported that the Chamber had £920.00 in the bank. It was also noted that invoices for membership would be issued from next year onwards. Iris also stated that some payments which had been made by BACS had not been accompanied by details of which business had made the payment. Please can members check and let Iris know if they did not put a reference on the payment. <u>ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u>
7	MEMBERSHIP REPORT
	It was reported that membership remained the same and that Sue Roberts was chasing up some outstanding membership fees.
8	WEBSITE
8.1	Alister and Clare were due to see Delwedd regarding the website to discuss how to display information on each business in a more useful way rather than simply by an alphabetical list of business names. <u>ACTION: CLARE BRITTON AND ALISTER HAVERON</u>
8.2	All members were asked again to review the information on their business and to bring it up to date including new or additional photographs. <u>ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u>
8.3	Elen's Castle had paid for an advertisement but had not yet provided the basic information needed for it to be set up by Alister. <u>ACTION: ELEN'S CASTLE</u>
8.4	A photographic competition was proposed with the top 10 entries having a slot on the Chamber website.
9	TOURISM
	Clare stated that a Classic Car Rally club was keen to come to Blaenau Ffestiniog and either 3 rd or 31 st July 2016 was suggested. It was noted that a vintage tractor rally (around 200 entries) was to be held in Blaenau Ffestiniog in June when members would drive from Dolgellau, stay for around 4 hours and then drive back again. Members were keen to pursue the proposal to hold a classic car rally. <u>ACTION: CLARE BRITTON</u>
10	FIREWORK NIGHT
	Kevin Baldwin stated that more stewards would need to be identified nearer the 5 th November so that they could take collections towards the cost of the fireworks that had been ordered. No entry fee will be charged so it will be donations only which would all go to Blaenau Bendigedig. The risk assessment had been done. On the night there would be a tombola (donations to Kevin at De Niro's please), food, cakes and craft stalls amongst others. Donations for having a table were also asked for rather than making a charge. . It was noted that Blaenau Bendigedig had deregistered as a charity but was about to re-register. <u>ACTION: ALL MEMBERS – ITEMS FOR TOMBOLA AND RAFFLE PLEASE</u>
11	CHRISTMAS LIGHTS
	The Chamber and the Town Council were working together with Blaenau Bendigedig. A theme of 'Christmas' had been decided for the shop windows in Blaenau Ffestiniog. In addition to the shops there would be just a few stalls in the Town Hall as well. It was agreed that a Treasure Hunt would be held so that competitors needed to find something in every shop window with a good prize at the end for the winner. The local school are making lanterns for a parade and Blaenau Bendigedig were providing the lights to go inside the lanterns. The fancy dress competition would be "Snow Queen" and "Jack Frost". Other competitions would also be held during the evening.

12	PROPOSED CUTS BY GWYNEDD COUNCIL
12.1	It was noted that the proposed cuts by Gwynedd Council included the Tourism and Business Support departments and councillors had already demonstrated at workshops earlier in the year their limited support to protect these two departments and services. Public consultation was underway and all individuals and all businesses in Gwynedd have the chance to identify which of the council's services they do not want to be cut. An open day had been held in Blaenau Ffestiniog on 16 th October and an evening forum was due to take place on 2nd November at Ysgol y Moelwyn . However, pre-registration for the meeting is required and can be done by going online at https://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/en/Council/Have-your-say/Gwynedd-Challenge.aspx or telephone 01766 771000. <u>URGENT ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u>
12.2	Use the same online link above to give your views on which services you do not want cut. You can answer as an individual and then again as a business. <u>URGENT ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u>
12.3	Gwynedd Business Network is totally opposed to the proposed cuts in these 2 departments and has issued a press statement which they have sent to every councillor. The network represents around 700 businesses in Gwynedd.
13.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS
13.1	Gail had been in contact with Cycling World followed by a discussion by Clare with the magazine. It was agreed to that Clare would discuss an advertisement within the suggested editorial that the magazine would include about cycling in the area. <u>ACTION: CLARE BRITTON</u>
13.2	Clare would like to invite Larry Davies (retiring Community Rail Officer for the Conwy Valley line) to give a talk on Blaenau Ffestiniog as it used to be. Larry is retiring on 31st December after a period of around 10years. The Chamber are appreciative of the work Larry has done to support them and wish him well in his retirement. <u>ACTION: CLARE BRITTON</u>
13.3	Clare announced the very welcome news that Conwy Council had agreed to pay for the return of the bus service on Sundays between Dolwyddelen and Blaenau Ffestiniog. The service would start again in the near future. It was noted that the X1 service had been reduced so it only runs when the trains run. In addition, the route had been changed to go through Craig y Don rather than past Llandudno Hospital. A working group had been set up to lobby Edwina Hart AM to try and persuade the service provider to reinstate the services and route.
13.4	Clare announced that businesses that have Ffestiniog Railway timetable leaflets should check to ensure that they had the latest version which has the date as "2015/16". The original one that only had "2015" on it should no longer be used. Major engineering works mean that services will only run to Blaenau during Christmas week. <u>ACTION: ALL MEMBERS</u>
13.5	Antur Stiniog will run a First Aid Course related to outdoor pursuits only so please contact them directly if you want a place. <u>ACTION: MEMBERS (related to Outdoor Pursuits)</u>
13.6	It was noted that funds for soft product development and/or marketing were available for bids. Gail Jordan would prepare a bid for signage from Llechwedd to Blaenau Ffestiniog. <u>ACTION: GAIL JORDAN</u>
13.7	Local celebrity Meredydd "Mered" Evans was to be honoured by a dedication by the Local Literary Society on 20 th October 2015. A plaque on the wall of his former home, funded by the local newspaper boys, would be unveiled at a service that would also be attended by some of the local school children. Alister would add any photos from the event and some text to the Chamber's website in due course. <u>ACTION: ALISTER HAVERON</u>
13.8	Clare would contact Elen's Castle to see if it would be possible to arrange for the Chamber's Christmas Party to be held there on Monday 7 th December 2015. <u>ACTION: CLARE BRITTON</u>
14.	DATE OF NEXT MEETING
	To be confirmed.